DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 254 674 CE 040 922

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TITLE A Call for Action. 14th Annual Report.
INSTITUTION Alaska State Advisory Council for Vocational and Adult Education, Juneau.
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 50p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Advisory Committees; Annual Reports; *Cooperative Planning; Economic Development; *Educational Needs; Educational Philosophy; *Education Work Relationship; Institutional Cooperation; Postsecondary Education; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; *Program Improvement; School Role; Secondary Education; *State Programs; Statewide Planning; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Alaska

ABSTRACT

This annual report presents eight recommendations of the Alaska State Advisory Council on Vocational and Career Education, along with comments received at public hearings on the recommendation, a summary of what action has been taken to date, and finally, comments from the State Advisory Council. The eight recommendations are the following: (1) that a statewide governance structure be created in order to improve the quality of occupation preparation in Alaska and create a well-trained labor force; (2) that the state develop policies for economic and human resource development to guide the development of a statewide plan for vocational education and economic development; (3) that a division of vocational education be established in the State Department of Education; (4) that program standards for vocational education and employment training be established to establish goals for planning, evaluating, operating, and funding programs; (5) that the state develop and implement a delivery system that includes rural people; (6) that the state develop a training program designed to assist the private sector with short-term, start-up, job-specific training for both new and expanding industries; (7) that the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents form a joint vocational education subcommittee reporting to both bodies for the principal purpose of implementing the Cooperative Operational Plan for Education; and (8) that a statewide nondiscrimination policy be developed. (KC)

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# A Call for Action

## Alaska State Advisory Council on Vocational and Career Education

## 14th Annual Report

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| Ms. Rosie Peterson | Juneau | Executive Director |

# ALASKA STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL
# ON VOCATIONAL AND CAREER EDUCATION

## ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT
## TO THE
## STATE BOARD OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
## (Also the State Board of Education)

Prepared by Rosie Peterson
Executive Director

The primary concern of the State Advisory Council is to advocate better occupational preparation programs for broader segments of the state's population. The Council is hopeful that the items for inquiry and the recommendations forwarded will be received in the same constructive spirit in which they are offered.

## State Board of Vocational Education

January 30-31, 1984
Board Meeting
Juneau, Alaska

Additional Board Member
Sue Hull
Fairbanks

--Photo Courtesy of the State Department of Education



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# Dedication

Not often in the course of events does a public agency display such forthright determination as has the State Board of Education in its quest to solve the problems facing vocational and career education in the State of Alaska. When agency personnel and opinion makers in the field were saying, "we have thought about that but it won't work," the State Board continued to push forward. When others were saying it had been done that way before and it hadn't work, the Board held strong and asked that it be done. The State Board of Education has not settled for the status quo.

Since their appointment to the State Board of Education by Governor Sheffield, the Board has:

* Hired a Commissioner of Education who not only appreciates the benefits that can be achieved through a strong vocational curriculum, but who also advocates vocational preparation as a complement to a strong basic education;

* Chosen to dedicate a portion of their agenda to vocational issues, and as such sit separately as the State Board of Vocational Education;

* Adopted a state plan for career and vocational education which calls for comprehensive planning and evaluation; the development of program standards; fiscal integrity in the expenditure of state and federal vocational education dollars; comprehensive curriculum development; staff development assistance; and technical assistance to local educational agencies to implement local plans;

* Created the Office of Adult and Vocational Education by combining the former Office of Adult and Continuing Education and the Office of Career and Vocational Education, thus locating vocational education and adult basic education programs in the State Department of Education under one major authority,

While each of these actions by the State Board of Education will not in and of themselves guarantee higher quality vocational education programs throughout the state, they do collectively create an atmosphere where vocational education planners are given the structure---and the enthusiasm---whereby to develop programs that will prepare Alaska's youth to become the workers and technicians of tomorrow.

It is for these activities, and these accomplishments, that the Alaska State Advisory Council would like to dedicate this Annual Evaluation Report to the State Board of Education. Without their steadfast leadership and insistence on high standards and principles in vocational education others would not have been likely to follow in their footsteps. The State Board of Education has taken the important first step. Lead on.

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# Forward

Each year the Alaska State Advisory Council on Vocational and Career Education is required by Federal law to prepare an annual evaluation report on Alaska's vocational education and training efforts in the following areas: program effectiveness; program evaluations; distribution of funds; needs identification and assessment; and policy recommendations. It should be stressed at the outset that this document is not a report of a single, isolated evaluation, but rather a summary of many Council evaluation activities. Findings and conclusions presented herein are the result of year-yound evaluation activities based on projects, surveys, observations, Council meetings, public hearings, interviews and the analysis of various data pertaining to vocational education and employment training.

Aside from its avowed purpose of complying with Federal mandates, the Advisory Council hopes that the information contained in this report will prove useful to the many groups, agencies and individuals interested in strengthening vocational education and training in Alaska. Rather than being unduly critical in nature, the Council views the findings of this report as providing a basis for increased focus on those areas where the greatest opportunities exist for the advancement of vocational education and employment training.

# Introduction

The 1982-1983 fiscal year was not a year of "business as usual" for vocational education and employment training in Alaska. The call for change could be heard echoing from classrooms, corporate offices, board rooms, work sites, and training centers, through the halls of the Legislature and into the administrative chambers of the Governor of this great state.

The winter of 1982 saw a bill introduced into the second session of the Twelfth Alaska State Legislature which would have created a separate state agency for vocational education and employment training. As House Bill 695 worked its way through the labyrinth of the legislative process, employers, trainers, corporate officers, educators and the recipients of training brought forth an identical message: The State of Alaska could be doing a much better job of training its citizens to meet the manpower needs for continued economic development in Alaska. At the end of the session the Legislature had created, and the former Governor signed into law, the Vocational Education and Employment Training Task Force. Their charge was specific. They were to make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature that would improve the structure, policy, planning, delivery and evaluation of vocational education and employment training in Alaska. Further they were to make recommendations that would benefit the short-term and long-term economic development of the state.

In the late summer of 1982 the former Governor appointed the Task Force and they began researching in greater depth the problems facing occupational preparation in Alaska. Among others, they found the following persistent problems plaguing training efforts in the state:

*Fragmentation and duplication of programs
*Lack of statewide program standards
*Lack of comprehensive planning
*Insufficient utilization of labor market data for planning;
*Inadequate vocational education and employment training for Alaskans;
*Lack of statewide policy and planning linking occupational preparation and economic development;
*Lack of standards for equal access to employment training and opportunities for minorities, women, the handicapped and the disadvantaged; and
*Inadequate emphasis on career education as an essential component of vocational education.

While the Task Force began its deliberations Alaska was embroiled in an election year that would usher in a new Governor and House of Representatives, replace one-third of the State Senate, and would answer the question as to whether to State Capital should be moved from Juneau to

Southcentral Alaska. During that election one candidate for Governor showed that he clearly understood the problems facing occupational preparation in Alaska. There was one candidate who pledged that if elected he would work to forge a solution to the time-worn problems and organize the system so it would efficiently deliver high quality vocational education and employment training programs to Alaska's citizens. That candidate was Bill Sheffield. On November 2, 1982, the citizens of Alaska elected Governor Bill Sheffield and he has not forgotten his campaign pledge.

In March of 1983 the Task Force released its recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor. While the recommendations did not receive great fanfare, they have continued to be a topic of discussion throughout Alaska.

In October of 1983 public hearings were conducted on the recommendations of the Task Force and it can easily be said that the issues surfaced by the Task Force, and their solutions, were validated by the interested citizenry of Alaska.

Governor Sheffield, on December 1, 1983, designated the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education as the lead agency for the development of uniform policies for occupational preparation in Alaska, and to forward to him, no later than March 1, 1984, a recommendation for initial management guidelines that would bring occupational concerns under one umbrella organization and would lead to a coordinated plan of service throughout the state. The Commission has accepted the challenge and they were actively researching the issue at the writing of this report.

As the recommendations are under such heavy scrutiny at this time, the Advisory Council felt it opportune to use this year's evaluation report to look at those recommmendations in the light of what has transpired to date, and what the Council feels needs to be highlighted or stressed in the future.

In that light, on the following pages you will find each Task Force recommendation followed by a sample of the testimony received on that recommendation, a summary of what action has been taken to date, and finally, pertinent comments from the State Advisory Council.

While the Alaska Advisory Council realizes this fashion of reporting does not necessarily respond to federal reporting mandates, we believe the following pages will far better serve the State of Alaska at this crossroad in time.

| TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION | PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATION |
|---|---|
| The Task Force Recommends that a statewide governance structure assigning an Assistant Chief of Staff for Vocational Education and Employment Training be created in order to improve the quality of occupational preparation in Alaska and create a well trained Alaska labor force. | *"Vocational education needs strong leadership. At this point it is a rudderless ship manned by a motley crew of over eighty agencies who claim some interest in its destination. We need to give that ship a rudder and a strong captain."*<br>*-Training Administrator*<br><br>*"It is important that a more concrete governmental organization be met in order to maintain a vocational education effort that will not have to depend on the good graces and ability of the politics on hand."*<br>*-Vocational Educator*<br><br>*"It sounds simple enough to divide the eight recommendations into three categories until one asks, which is most important and which should be attacked first? Because the delivery system for offering progressive vocational education involves a dynamic combination of variables including effectiveness of policy, appropriateness of structure, and adequacy of standards, I would propose all three concerns be addressed simultaneously and immediately. Addressing each individually ignores the complex, dynamic interrelationships among the areas. From a simplistic, systematic viewpoint policy provides direction, structure provides implementation, and standards provide quality parameters. The lack of any of the components of the process severely limits the state's ability to offer timely, effective and progressive programs."*<br>*-University Professor*<br><br>*"ASVA totally supports this recommendation and wants to reemphasize the involvement of the employment training component. It is necessary to allocate vocational and employment training resources through a central agency and ASVA sees the responsibility of tying in education, labor and industry for this purpose being focused in one office."*<br>*-Officer, Alaska State Vocational Asso.*<br><br>*"A governance structure whereby objective decisions relative to vocational education and training will be reached is an absolute necessity to any effective system."*<br>*-Local Vocational Education Administrator* |

RESPONSE TO DATE

On December 1, 1983, Governor Bill Sheffield charged the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education with initiating:

> an effort to identify directions, costs, regulatory and statutory factors, and existing programs that can be brought under one umbrella organization that will lead to an coordinated plan of service (for occupational preparation in the State of Alaska).
>
> My request is that you develop the initial management guidelines as soon as possible with appropriate cost estimates and subsequent implementation deadlines to be delivered not later than March 1, 1984. Following submission of an acceptable strategy, I expect to designate another agency as operational lead, but want to stress that your tasks will be central to resolving this issue."

To date the Postsecondary Commission has accepted the challenge and has launched into an extensive series of interviews with vocational program specialists, program managers, decision makers, elected officials, appointed officials, representatives of the employing community, and generally persons affecting, or affected by, the delivery of occupational programs in Alaska.

The thrust of the activities of the Commission to date has been to explore not only the specific governance recommendation of the Task Force but to analyze and research a multiplicity of governance structures in their quest to bring a recommendation to Governor Sheffield by March 1, 1984.

ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMENT

Since its inception in 1969 the State Advisory Council has advocated the development of a strong governance structure for occupational preparation in Alaska. When one considers there are over 200 public boards, councils, agencies, and institutions involved in vocational preparation efforts in Alaska it is no wonder chaos reigns in the system. It is no wonder the state suffers from costly program duplication, a lack of articulation between and within agencies, and all of the other maladies we might enumerate in describing the "health" of Alaska's occupational delivery system.

Over the past fifteen years, while analyzing a multiplicity of governance structures available to bring about greater articulation in vocational program delivery, the Council has become increasingly more firmly convinced that the greatest number of training problems would be solved by bringing the "lions share" of vocational programs under one lead agency. With such a governance structure the lead agency would need to be held responsible for developing and implementing statewide policies via the conduit of a Statewide Occupational Preparation Plan developed by the agencies it is to guide and ultimately hold accountable.

Understanding that not all boards, councils, institutions and programs can be directly placed under the control of a lead agency, a formal organization must exist between the lead agency and the other agencies involved in occupational endeavours to assure a coordinated effort.

With that understanding, and outside any further discussion of a plausible state governance structure, the Council feels each state agency and the University of Alaska should be closely scrutinized to see if they are developing well-articulated programs within their own institutional parameters.

For instance, much testimony was received by the State Advisory Council regarding the delivery of vocational

(continued on Page 20)

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| TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION | PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATION |
|---|---|
| The Task Force recommends that the state develop policies for economic and human resource development. These policies shall guide the development of a statewide plan which coordinates occupational preparation and economic development in the state. | *"Policy becomes necessary as a first step in clarifying roles and responsibility in goal achievement. It is from such activity---and only from such activity---that appropriate quality program standards can be established and maintained."*<br>*-Local Director of Vocational Education*<br><br>*"The types of issues I have touched on and those addressed by the Task Force recommendations hit upon the critical topics which must be addressed; analyzing what is available in vocational education, establishing a statewide policy, coordinating that policy and then implementing that policy in such a way that it supports economic development and provides meaningful jobs to citizens in Alaska."*<br>*-Borough Mayor*<br><br>*"We, as professionals in vocational education and industry related to vocational preparation and employment training, should not settle for a statewide program which is merely surviving. We should promote programs that are dynamic and progressive. Such programs will exist only if the development of policy, structure, and standards occurs in a timely manner and responds to the current needs and concerns. To settle for less is self-defeating."*<br>*-University Professor*<br><br>*"We have the necessary resources, but they must be unified and directed for maximum results."*<br>*-Vocational Education Teacher*<br><br>*"For a long time I have spoken about the need to match vocational training with economic development activities in interior Alaska. This is essential if we want to get the most benefit out of the training opportunities as well as the economic development opportunities in this part of the state."*<br>*-Borough Mayor*<br><br>*"Documentation, I think, has come last....probably come after Legislative appropriations. I think too often Legislators have ruled on almost a pork barrel basis and established vocational centers where none were needed."*<br>*-University Professor* |

| RESPONSE TO DATE | ADVISORY COUNCIL REPSONSE |
| --- | --- |
| Governor Sheffield, in his letter of December 1, 1983, assigning the Alaska Postsecondary Commission with formulating recommendations on a coordinated plan of service for occupational preparation in the state, also designated the Commission as the lead agency "for the development of uniform policies for vocational and career education in the State of Alaska." | While the State Advisory Council recognizes that individual policies directing vocational education and employment training exist within the state bureaucracy, they neither individually, nor collectively, constitute a clearly articulated statewide policy on occupational preparation. What passes for policy is a vast and growing complex of programs. |
| The Commissions recommendations are to be brought to Governor Sheffield by March 1, 1984. | In the absence of a clearly articulated statewide policy Alaska occupational training has experienced: costly duplication of programs and services; an ever-increasing proliferation of agencies, councils, boards and institutions involved in one or more facets of vocational education or employment training; the creation of new programs, classes and facilities without regard to the needs of the employing community; and public programs increasingly found in competition with the private sector of Alaska's economy. |
| | It is the contention of the State Advisory Council that if the government continues to function without a planned framework, i.e. operational policies, the result will be continued ineffective and inefficient delivery of services to the public. Conversely, a well organized and well articulated statewide policy will achieve pertinent and responsive programs. |
| | The Council would like to take this opportunity to applaud the leadership Governor Sheffield has taken in charging the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education with the responsibility of developing uniform policies for occupational preparation in Alaska. |
| | COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION |
| | The State Advisory Council recommends that policies be developed for occupational preparation in Alaska and that they be implemented through a statewide plan which would coordinate and direct those agencies involved in occupational and delivery and economic development in the state. 7 |

| TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION | PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATION |
|---|---|
| The Task Force recommends that a division of vocational education be established in the Department of Education, and further that a similar office that oversees all levels of vocational education be established within the University of Alaska system. | *"ASVA supports the need for a Division of Vocational Education, but cannot support an office within the University of Alaska until that institution philosophically provides support for vocational education within the mission statement of the University."*<br>*-Officer, Alaska State Vocational Asso.*<br><br>*"Our primary concern is the establishment of a Vocational Education Office within in the University System. At the present time the University does not have a mission statement for vocational education. We feel this must occur before a Vocational Education Office is established in the University System."*<br>*-Secondary Vocational Education Faculty*<br><br>*"There is a great difference between large facilities in the community College system and rural ones and there is nobody to pull that all together. I would like to see some coordination in that area."*<br>*-University Professor*<br><br>*"I would certainly like to see some coordination in the Community College programs and feel that this would really aid throughout the whole system."*<br>*-University Instructor*<br><br>*"The Department of Education is to be commended for its recent action reorganizing its structure to bring secondary and postsecondary vocational program administration together under common supervision. As to the effectiveness of this change "the jury will remain out" until sufficient time elapses for judgement to occur."*<br>*-Local Director of Vocational Education*<br><br>*"Vocational and Career Education need people working on vocational education that are interested, motivated and working full-time for the stated goals in career and vocational education. Vocational Education is not a part-time commitment."*<br>*-Apprenticeship Trainer*<br><br>*"Through my work with vocational teachers and students, several grassroot needs have become apparent. First and foremost, vocational teachers want more direct support at both the local and state levels."*<br>*-University Professor* |

RESPONSE TO DATE

On October 4, 1983, the State Board of Education voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Commissioner of Education that the Office of Adult and Continuing Education be merged with the Office of Career and Vocational Education. In compliance with the Board's action, by mid-October the professional staff was interviewed and specific programmatic assignments were determined. By the first week in November both offices had physically moved to one location in the Department of Education's office building. The merged entity is now titled the Office of Adult and Vocational Education. While the new organization is not a separate division within the Department as recommended by the Task Force, the Director does report directly to the Commissioner of Education.

Commensurate action has not been evidenced in the University of Alaska system. While the Board of Regents entertained lengthy public comment on the problems facing rural and vocational education during Education, the only action to date has been the appointment of a committee to study the issue by the Chancellor of the Community Colleges and Rural Education and Extension Division. Since its inception the committee met once in Anchorage. Since that meeting the committee has been disbanded.

ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMENT

It goes without saying that the Department of Education and the State Board of Education have displayed a great amount of foresight and leadership in creating the combined Office of Adult and Vocational Education. While, as one individual testified at the hearings, "the jury will remain out," the response to the reorganization has been positive.

The present organizational structure within the University system does not seem to elicit such positive response. One need only to read the public response to the left to realize the University not only has problems articulating outside its confines---it also has that problem within its own organization. While many hoped that CREE would provide that internal and external articulation, it has not come to pass.

| TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION | PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATION |
|---|---|
| The Task Force recommends that program standards for vocational education and employment training be established for the purpose of providing benchmarks for planning, evaluating, operating and funding occupational programs. | *"Program standards should be set up---in fact it is a necessity."*<br>*-Vocational Education Teacher*<br><br>*"I really think teacher standards would improve the services to the students in the State of Alaska and I think that's what we are all looking forward to."*<br>*-University Professor*<br><br>*"Of the eight recommendations from the Task Force, I believe this one to be the most important. Those of us at the local level MUST HAVE STANDARDS established and supported from a statewide level. It can be only through such standards that local, regional, and statewide skill training needs will be met by completors from quality vocational programs. One has only to look around this state to observe the lack of consistency regarding program delivery. While local conditions differ, we can and we must develop standards which are appropriate to ensure program quality and effectiveness. It is our most important need at this time."*<br>*-Local Vocational Education Director*<br><br>*"We are going to need to have the districts accountable for (vocational education) funding."*<br>*-Vocational Education Teacher*<br><br>*"The Task Force is to be commended for their recommendations which would resolve many of the problem areas. Recommendations 1 through 4 are excellent, and pertain closest to me as a teacher. To give vocational education the attention it deserves, it is necessary to create one statewide plan and one educational office each at DOE and U of A. These actions, combined with the establishment of program standards, would unify the entire state into cohesive action, more effective effort. I support the adoption of these measures."*<br>*-Vocational Education Teacher*<br><br>*"Career education along with career guidance and counseling are essential supportive programs to vocational education and employment training. As such they should be required programs in the public schools, community colleges and vocational institutions of this state."*<br>*-Private Consultant* |

RESPONSE TO DATE

Much activity has taken place within the State Department of Education with regard to the development of standards.

First, on October 30, 1983, the State Board of Education unanimously adopted the "Alaska Department of Education Career and Vocational Education Plan" which outlines a process which includes specific activities, timelines and completion indicators for the development and implementation of "statewide (career and vocational education) program standards for the purpose of providing benchmarks for planning, evaluating, operating and funding occupational programs."

Secondly, and at the same meeting, the State Board of Education voted unanimously to promulgate regulations defining the criteria to be considered in the development of new vocational/technical centers in the state. The regulations specifically require that applicants conduct a feasibility study which: (1) documents a shortage of qualified or trained applicants for the specific occupations to be developed; (2) documents a potential employment placement rate of seventy-five percent for program completers; and (3) justifies the training as a non-duplicated effort in the occupational training areas. A period of open public comment has passed and the Department is currently reviewing the promulgated regulations and formulating a recommendation for the Board's action sometime in the spring of 1984.

Other than the aforementioned activities the State Advisory Council is not aware of other state departments or the University having developed or implemented program standards in the area of occupational preparation.

ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMENT

In a simple analogy:

STANDARDS : QUALITY OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAMS ::

BUILDING CODES : WELL-BUILT STRUCTURES

While we would not want someone to build the Advisory Council a sub-standard building, factory, classroom or home, likewise we would not like our children taught in programs that shun adequate planning, utilize out-dated materials or equipment, or hire non-qualified staff.

When discussing standards it is important to understand that the development and implementation of standards does not mean standardization. Rather, standards represent the bottom line on what is needed to assure the public a vocational program can indeed prepare students for available jobs.

Areas that should be addressed by standards are: program planning, evaluation and development; instructional delivery; facilities and equipment; student services; student leadership organizations; equal access; qualified staff and administration, etc.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION

The State Advisory Council, like the Task Force, strongly recommends that program standards be established and implemented for the purpose of providing benchmarks for planning, evaluating, operating and funding occupational programs in Alaska.

| TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION | PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATION |
|---|---|
| The Task Force recommends that the State of Alaska develop and implement a viable delivery system that offers rural people an opportunity for training for paid and unpaid work. | *"We applaud the Vocational Education and Employment Training Task Force for its sensitivity to the needs of rural Alaskans as demonstrated by its recommendations and support documents. Alaska Natives are all too often Alaska's forgotten people."*<br>*-Executive Officer, Native Organization*<br><br>*"To go beyond the recommendation before us, it is my suggestion that we look at the delivery system. More specifically, we need to pay special attention to rural Alaska, which has always been a step-child."*<br>*-Training Administrator*<br><br>*"With regard to vocational education generally, ANEA believes that Alaska Native students should be able to obtain relevant, quality vocational training and employment entry level skills in their own regions without the necessity to travel to Seward, Alaska, for training."*<br>*-Executive Officer, Native Organization*<br><br>*"Recommendation Five has even more specific application for Interior Alaska. There is a dire need for the development and implementation of a delivery system which provides rural people with an opportunity for the type of training that is relevant for the type of work they perform in their local communities, as well as preparing them for work which they may find in neighboring communities."*<br>*-Borough Mayor*<br><br>*"It has been said that we have more electrical arc welders in villages that do not have electricity than the Lower 48 has arc welders. That's a good statement. I know that that has gone on again and again---train arc welders and they go back to someplace where they don't even have someplace to plug in an arc welder, let alone a need to weld anything."*<br>*-University Professor*<br><br>*"The state and rural Alaskans can no longer accept classes where students build dog sleds and boats; while workers from Anchorage are building houses, schools, airports and installing generators, electrical systems, TV cable and telephones in rural villages."*<br>*-Vocational Educator* |

RESPONSE TO DATE

On December 1, 1983, Governor Bill Sheffield charged the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education to "initiate an effort to identify directions, costs regulatory and statutory factors, and existing programs that can be brought under one umbrella organization that will lead to a coordinated plan of service (for occupational preparation in the State of Alaska)."

While the state has not directly or formally discussed the delivery of occupational programs in rural Alaska in an organized or coordinated fashion, it is assumed by the State Advisory Council that if an "umbrella" organization is indeed appointed that they will be directly charged with coordinating a plan of services in the state that will of necessity include developing a viable delivery system for occupational programs in rural Alaska.



ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMENT

How to deliver quality vocational education and employment training programs in rural Alaska has been a topic of discussion since before Alaska achieved statehood. The question still remains unanswered.

Delivery of rural training is definitely a crutial task before the State of Alaska---a task that requires special focus and attention. There will be no easy or inexpensive solutions in bringing relevant, high quality vocational education and employment training to rural Alaskans. Our rural Alaskans should not continue to be "Alaska's forgotten people." Either the state should provide the training they promise, or stop promising to do so.

| TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION | PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATION |
| --- | --- |
| The Task Force recommends that the State of Alaska develop a training program designed to assist the private sector with short-term, start-up, job specific training for both new and expanding industries. | *"I believe recommendation six of the Task Force consisely addresses the relevant issue that programs must be designed to assist the private sector, both new and expanding industries, in rapidly meeting specific training needs. This is key if we are going to use our local labor forces on local projects."*<br>*-Borough Mayor*<br><br>*"We should have some flexible money available so that business and industry needs can be met."*<br>*-University Instructor*<br><br>*"In any case, the effectiveness is directly tied to the existence of local vocational personnel, supported by state personnel, policies, standards, and start-up dollars which can be assessed with quick, almost immediate turn around time. The needs of a private sector entity cannot wait through a normal state or local budget cycle only to be administered through non-vocationally trained personnel."*<br>*-Local Director of Vocational Education*<br><br>*"Not all vocational education training needs to be in a 9 month segment. That's the way most things are set up because that's the way teachers teach across the state. I think that's fine where it's available but I think we need short term programs to meet the needs and we should have some money available for hiring those teachers just to teach those programs and perhaps even to lease facilities. When it's needed and when it's over it's done with. But in fact this does not happen, has not happened, and I would certainly like to see it."*<br>*-Univeresity Instructor*<br><br>*"In conclusion ANEA believes vocational education is a key element in Alaska's economic development and survival."*<br>*-Executive Officer, Native Organization* |

RESPONSE TO DATE

The State Board of Education, during preparation of the FY 85 budget, asked the State Administration for a one million dollar fund to use for short-term, job specific training. The fund does not appear in the state operating budget that Governor Sheffield delivered to the Legislature the week of January 9, 1984.

ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMENT

A common complaint the State Advisory Council receives from employers and economic planners is that the state's training institutions, due to budgeting constraints, can not respond quickly enough to the needs of an expanding market for skilled employees. For instance, if a company approached the Seward Skill Center in January of 1984 in need of specially trained workers, under normal budgeting procedures the Center would not have available funds to plan or conduct the training until after July 1, 1985.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION

As economic development can not take place in the absence of a trained and skilled work force, the State Advisory Council recommends that the state develop and implement an "Alaska A.S.S.I.S.T. Program":

Alaska
State
Short-duration
high-Impact
Start-up and expansion
Training

Training conducted under such a program should be planned with the industry hiring the completers, should be non-duplicating, should be intensive and of short-duration, and should specifically target an identified need.

The concept behind such a program is that private and public industry and business can form a partnership which trains Alaskans for jobs and stimulates the economic development of the state.

| TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION | PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATION |
|---|---|
| The Task Force recommends that the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents form a joint vocational education sub-committee reporting to both bodies for the principal purpose of implementing the Cooperative Operational Plan for Education (COPE). | *"On recommendation number seven I whole-heartedly concur with the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents working together to implement cooperative regional and statewide planning. However, I believe that planning must occur under guidelines having greater strength, direction and consequences than those found in the current C.O.P.E. Plan."*<br>*-Private Consultant*<br><br>*"Secondary and postsecondary articulation is another common problem area in most states. I would recommend that the Cooperative Operational Plan for Education known as COPE be further studied as to potential local impact prior to implementation. It is a document which I feel embraces the problem and begins to establish some suggested solutions, however, from my brief exposure, I would like to see greater attention focused on COPE with expectations of more specificity as to its use prior to adoption."*<br>*-Secondary Vocational Administrator*<br><br>*"COPE has become the new buzzword for Alaskan education administrators, but some feel that the acronym is more aptly named than originally intended, not because it isn't an effective policy, but because there are still basic territorial problems and layers of administration that inhibit a true "trimming of the sails."*<br>*-Training Administrator*<br><br>*"The COPE agreement according to some sources was supposed to be a heaven sent organizational plan to align higher education facilities. I have yet to hear what's new on this for the past year. I think it is good and will help students to uniformly move in and out of the system. However, where do you put the TNT to get it off dead center?"*<br>*-Apprenticeship Trainer*<br><br>*"ASVA has some reservations about administrative responsibility and inconsistencies in the Cooperative Operational Plan for Education, but supports the concept as a place to begin cooperative activities for planning and delivering vocational resources."*<br>*-Officer, Alaska State Vocational Asso.* |

| RESPONSE TO DATE | ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMENT |
| --- | --- |
| In August of 1981 the administrations of the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents met in response to a directive from the former Governor, Jay Hammond, calling for a solution to the problems surrounding the delivery of educational services in rural Alaska. The culminating document was the Cooperative Operational Plan for Education, or COPE. The Plan was adopted by both Boards by December 4, 1981, and forwarded to Governor Hammond.<br><br>At the Joint Meeting of the University Board of Regents and the State Board of Education held on November 2, 1983, a considerable portion of the agenda was devoted to the progress of the COPE Plan. While the University administration presented their analysis of the status of activities emerging from COPE, members from the interested public offered another view which gave evidence that many of the problems COPE was to remedy still exist today.<br><br>At the meeting two motions were introduced attendant to the aforementioned discussion. One would have extended the life of the COPE agreement, the other would have created a sub-committee of both boards to continue working on the issues that surfaced at the joint meeting. Both motions failed. | While the State Advisory Council would support direct communication between the State Board of Education and the Board of Regents regarding vocational education, the Advisory Council cannot support further resources being expended to implement the C.O.P.E. Agreement. |

| TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION | PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATION |
|---|---|
| The Task Force recommends the development of a statewide policy guaranteeing equal access to training programs regardless of age, sex, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, handicapping condition or geographic location. | *"We have focused in on rural as a problem but its not just a rural problem it's also a problem for females."*<br>*-University Instructor*<br><br>*"We support Recommendation Eight for equal access but feel the economically disadvantaged should be included."*<br>*-Secondary Vocational Education Faculty*<br><br>*"3-10 percent of our population is handicapped....and unless our vocational education system addresses their needs they will be left with inadequate vocational planning. I would like to see some of the rceommendations address more of the needs of vocational education students."*<br>*-Special Education Teacher*<br><br>*"A lot has been done on the secondary level to develop programs for the handicapped portions of the population---unfortunately it has been on a catch as catch can basis. So we always end up with your comment about vocational education being on the back burner---special education can't even get on the stove!"*<br>*-Director, Special Education*<br><br>*"Another problem with access to training programs for persons with disabilities is the physical barriers present at AVTEC. At the present time it is not accessible for physically disabled persons."*<br>*-Specialist, Division of Voc. Rehab.*<br><br>*"In light of these concerns, we recommend that the eight policy revisions proposed by the Task Force include language which specifically speaks to the needs of the disabled. We have learned from past experience that you cannot assume that services will be provided through a general guarantee of equal access to training opportunities for the handicapped. While the vocational education services required by the disabled are essentially the same as for the general population (evaluation, counseling, training, job placement and follow-up), additional special services may also be required. Training courses may need to make physical accommodations for persons in wheel chairs and some courses may need to be lengthened to meet the needs of the mentally retarded."*<br>*-Chair, Governor's Council on the Handicapped and Gifted* |

RESPONSE TO DATE

On December 1, 1983, Governor Bill Sheffield designated the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education as the "lead agency for the development of uniform policies for vocational and career education in Alaska." Given the public statements of Governor Sheffield, and those shared with the State Advisory Council in the Governor's Office, it is the feeling of the Council that equal access is a component within that directive.

We might further mention that "equal access to education and training without regard to race, age, religion, sex, creed, national or ethnic origin, handicapping condition of grographic location," is an objective of the recently adopted "Alaska State Department of Education Vocational and Career Education Plan."

ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMENT

As the Alaska State Advisory Council has long been on record advocating the development and implementation of a strong policy on equal access, it is indeed a sad commentary that we have not yet achieved what we feel is a basic right of citizenship.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION

The State Advisory Council recommends that the state develop and implement a policy guaranteeing equal access to training programs regardless of age, sex, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, family income, handicapping condition or geographic location.

Continued from Page 5:

education programs by the University of Alaska system. One need only to review the comments received to conclude that the system is not fulfilling its role with regard to the delivery of occupational programs.

Equal scrutiny must be given to the other state agencies involved in occupational preparation so as to assure internal articulation within agencies.

# Previous Council Reports

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| FY 1973 | An Evaluation of Secondary School Guidance and Counseling Programs: Phase I |
| FY 1974 | An Evaluation of Selected Secondary School Guidance and Counseling Programs in Alaska: Phase II |
| FY 1975 | Technical Report of an Evaluation Study of Vocational Education in the State of Alaska |
| FY 1976 | Evaluation of Selected Local Vocational Education Advisory Committees in the State of Alaska |
| Fy 1977 | An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the State Advisory Council on Vocational Education in Terms of Communication and Status on Recommendations Made in Previous Evaluations |
| FY 1978 | An Identification of Vocational Education/Training Activity in Alaska |
| FY 1979 | A Look at Articulation in Occupational Preparation in Alaska |
| FY 1980 | Preparing Alaskans To Do Alaska's Work |
| FY 1981 | A Call for Leadership |
| FY 1982 | A Call for Commitment to Policy |